

Perian Sully – Notes and thoughts

LA CASIS – Tag You're It: A Dialog Between Social Tagging and Traditional Classification

Oviatt Library, CSU Northridge
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9:45 – 10:25 – Overview of Social Tagging – Gabriel Lundeen, Los Angeles Public Library

Social tags are “descriptive metadata for the masses”

<http://www.citeulike.org/> is del.icio.us for academic papers

Why should we offer tagging?

- Engage users as active participants
- Improve OPAC and other online resources
- Personalize an otherwise impersonal experience
- Institutional and learning benefits and reinforcements

The big difference between digital and paper data is how classification works. Traditional taxonomies are designed for paper mediums, but do not scale well to digital mediums. However, taxonomies and folksonomies (public-developed taxonomies) are not mutually exclusive. They can enhance each other.

Some of the benefits from using social tagging:

- Gain feedback from users
- Enhance research
- Enhance serendipitous discovery
- Increase browsing through displays of popular topics

How do you differentiate between identical tags with different meanings (ie. Paris for Paris Hilton and Paris, France)? One solution may be to apply semantic tagging in the backend of the database (ie. city:paris and celebrity:paris).

As with all Web 2.0 tools, the concept of Radical Trust is key for successful implementation.

10:25 - 11:10 - Tagging Research: A Survey and Agenda - Jonathan Furner, UCLA

The history of tagging research predates tagging. There has been a body of research about indexing and descriptive metadata, but there is relatively little research about social or user tagging, which is focused on categorizing digital objects and representatives.

Research fronts for those papers which have been written encompass the following:

- How do people tag?
- Why do they tag?
- What social structures shape and are shaped by tagging?
- How might they tag?
- What are the best practices?
- What are the contexts and motivations for tagging?

- How do the networks and social interaction influence tagging?
- Which designs and interfaces work best?
- What are the effects - descriptive? (what are the kinds of relationships formed by tagging?)
- What are the effects - evaluative? (does it work?)
- Methods - how should tagging be studied?
- How does tagging change LIS (institutions, fields, paradigms)?

Does tagging work? There are two types of research focuses to answer this question...

Output-based:

- To what extent do tags support research discovery?
- Are the precision/recall scores good enough to justify tagging?

Outcome-based:

- To what extent does tagging support users' goals?
- How does tagging change cultural heritage institutions?
- Is the new search culture one of satisfying user expectations rather than optimizing them?

There is not much research currently about outcome-based results.

Perian's thoughts: Idea for a design model - intermixing taxonomical terms with folksonomic terms within the same tag cloud or list, but differentiating them by color or font type.

How have institutions adopted a design model which uses both controlled vocabularies and folksonomies?

In a way, museums are one-up on libraries on this topic because of their resistance to controlled vocabularies in the past. They might be better able to modify their practices to include user-defined vocabularies.

Applying terminology structures to digital objects may not be as helpful to users as we would like, but they do facilitate electronic sharing and consortiums. If structures and tags become more fluid, and as information exchange becomes more immediate, do consortiums become irrelevant?

(response to a question of mine, I think from Rich Cherry or Furner) The purpose of tagging in museums is often less about resource discovery and more about understanding objects. The act of tagging an image of a museum object is often used as a way for the user to analyze the object itself. The act itself is the outcome.

1:10 - 1:45 - Project Steve - Rich Cherry, Skirball

<http://steve.museum/>

Steve is an IMLS-funded research project, analyzing how people tag objects. Researchers change the options and layout to study different behavior patterns.

Steve is an open-source software which art museums can download and use to participate in the study. It is not yet designed as a tagging application.

1:45 - 2:20 - LibraryThing - Jezmyne Wescott, Candace Lebel, Alexandra Chappell, Claremont Colleges Libraries

LibraryThing is a social book cataloging website. <http://www.librarything.com/> They have a new application, LibraryThing for Libraries, which, for a minimal yearly fee, will take the ISBN numbers of a library and generate a Javascript code. The code can be embedded right into the library OPAC or website and it will pull tags from the LibraryThing website directly into the OPAC. Clicking on a tag will allow a user to see other books in the library's catalog with that tag, and explore other tags.

Claremont Colleges has 4 libraries, 7 institutions, and 7000 students. Uses III Millennium WebPAC Pro for OPAC. <http://blais.claremont.edu/>

LibraryThing is planning to implement LCSH into the tag cloud, and also adding LCCN and OCLC numbers to link to (right now, LibraryThing can only pull from the ISBN numbers).

Perian's thoughts: If we were to upload our images to Flickr, have them tagged by users, and then pull the tags into our catalog, can we link to related tags in Flickr which would then pull up community photographs? Might be a good way to integrate ourselves into a social/community experience.

2:20 - 2:55 - PennTags - Mike Winkler, University of Pennsylvania

<http://tags.library.upenn.edu/>

PennTags is a type of tagging software developed by the University of Pennsylvania. It's more of an infrastructure software, allowing users to modify web pages and tag pieces of them. It allows for the organization of website information around the user community and not around the content. For example, a class can take a class website and move around and modify the elements to suit their needs. Or they can create a collection of bookmarks to share with the wider community.

Perian's thoughts: Can we make the Magnes into a content aggregator, allowing users to pull diverse content and relate them to collection items? Maybe use something like PennTags for generating individual projects.

Can we use Google's OpenSocial somehow? From their website: *OpenSocial is a set of common APIs for building social applications across many websites. OpenSocial consists of both JavaScript APIs and Google Data APIs.* Example applications: <http://opensocial-examples.google.com/>